THE LIFE OF SAM HOUSE.

BRITISH MUSEUM

FOX FOR EVER

Publish'd for the Life of Sam House

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE LIFE AND POLITICAL OPINIONS OF THE LATE SAM HOUSE;

INTERSPERSED WITH CURIOUS

ANECDOTES AND AMOROUS INTRIGUES

OF THIS

SINGULAR AND DISTINGUISHED CHARACTER.

Publiſhed by Authority, from authentic Documents.

No man always a fool,
Every man ſometimes.—OLD ADAGE.

THE SECOND EDITION.

LONDON,
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[Price ONE SHILLING.]

W. Musgrave.

BRITISH MUSEUM

DEDICATION.

TO THE SOCIETY OF CONSTITUTIONAL WHIGS.

GENTLEMEN,

TO dedicate to you, the MEMOIRS of a MAN, with whom you were intimately acquainted, and of whoſe zeal and activity in the cauſe of Freedom you had the moſt convincing proofs, is a tribute due to your laudable exertions, your ſpirited firmneſs, and determined perſeverance in the ſame cauſe.

The materials of which the following hiſtorical outlines are compoſed,

ed, are not the conjectures of fancy, but founded on facts, communicated to the Editor, by perſons who, for many years, lived with Mr. HOUSE in the ſtricteſt intimacy of friendſhip.

That coolneſs and moderation, ſteadineſs of temper, and a diſpoſition to promote the general intereſts of mankind, may govern you in all your proceedings, is the ſincere wiſh of your

MUSEUM

Moſt obedient,

and very humble ſervant,

The EDITOR.

MEMOIRS

OF

SAM HOUSE.

THOUGH an attempt to tranſmit to poſterity, the life of a man, whoſe higheſt ſituation was that of a *publican*, may appear, not only ſtrange, but unneceſſary; yet it has frequently happened, that men of low rank and birth, have raiſed themſelves to the higheſt places of power and truſt; and by artifice created convulſions in States, which have terminated in revolutions.

Whilſt others, by a proper and welldirected exertion of their natural faculties, have done honor to themſelves, and rendering eſſential ſervice to ſociety, immortalized their names, and

raiſed monuments to their memory, of reſpect and imitation. To record the deſtructive artifices and treacherous actions of the former, that their conduct might be held up to univerſal deriſion and contempt, has always been conſidered laudable; it is no leſs commendable to tranſmit the patriotic ſpirit and benevolent actions of thoſe, whoſe love of liberty and general philanthropy, rendered their lives conſpicuous. Of the latter deſcription, together with many perſonal foibles and peculiarities, was the perſon we are about to treat of.

Mankind being formed for ſociety, each individual has a ſhare of anxiety or pleaſure, proportionate to his natural diſpoſition or ſituation in life. When the mind receives a direction to any particular object, it proceeds from certain opinions formed at an early period, or from habits and modes of thinking, acquired from aſſociating with particular deſcriptions of men.

Sentiments thus formed, when they become deeply rooted and ingrafted in the conſtitution; whether well or ill-founded, acquire ſtrength, and though wrong in the principle; yet, ſo ſtrong and forcible is prejudice, that, contrary to reaſon, ſound ſenſe, and experience, the

the mind too often fortifies itſelf againſt conviction, and ſhuts out every argument which may counteract a favorite opinion.

Such is the unaccountable diſpoſition of human nature, governed too frequently by whim and caprice, without having any ſolid or rational ground to juſtify it; yet, when the opinions and peculiarities of individuals are not hurtful to community, and have no other effect, than rendering the perſon ſingular; theſe foibles are not an object of cenſure.

But opinions, founded on ſound conſtitutional principles, ſupported with firmneſs and vigour; added to theſe, a benevolence of heart, a free, generous, and open ſpirit; even detraction itſelf, muſt forgive the foibles, frailties, and imperfections of ſuch a character.

In the preſent undertaking, we ſhall not imitate the practice of modern hiſtorians, by giving fabricated genealogical conjectures; or, pretend to give the pedigree of *Samuel Houſe*; the reader muſt content himſelf with being informed, that his father kept a public-houſe, in Petty France, Weſtminſter, where his ſon, SAM, the ſubject of this hiſtory, was born.

Aſſiſted only with a ſlender education, at the uſual age, he was put apprentice to the late

Mr. Peavy, Houſe-cooper, in Bembridge-ſtreet, St. Giles's; but his maſter being cruel in his diſpoſition, (like many others) had no mercy upon his ſervants, and made him work frequently until one o'clock in the morning, when, by violent labour, he ſtrained his arm, which continued contracted until his death. On reflection, this tyrant, conſidering he ſhould have him to provide for, now being incapable of working *double tides*, wiſely, with a *ſhew* of humanity, gave him up his indentures; and, at the age of eighteen, the world was all before him *to chooſe a place of reſt, and Providence his guide.*

The ill uſage he experienced in his firſt ſituation as an apprentice (for he often curſed his maſter's memory) probably made him that implacable enemy to tyranny and oppreſſion, which he continued to exemplify through the future period of his life.

In the capacity of a Houſe-cooper, we next hear of him at the Peacock Brewhouſe, Whitecroſs-ſtreet; where, he did not continue long. He afterwards engaged himſelf at Mr. Green's Brewhouſe, at Pimlico, and from his aſſiduity in buſineſs, he obtained the place of an, a-broad cooper.

About this time, near the age of twenty, he contracted

contracted an intimacy with a married woman, but ſhe not living with her huſband, SAM was unacquainted with her matrimonial engagement, till her death, which happened a ſhort time after. This woman was very fond of him, and, as love begets love, accounts for his affection to her; though ſhe was near forty, and not remarkably handſome, he has been heard to declare "*he loved her like his mother.*"

As he was ignorant of her marriage, ſo he did not know that ſhe was poſſeſſed of any property till her deceaſe, when to his ſurprize ſhe left him one hundred pounds, half of which ſum he laid out among his indigent acquaintance, preſenting them with clothes, &c. An early and noble inſtance of his generoſity.

We find alſo, that he was an a-broad cooper, at Maſon's Brewhouſe, St. Giles's, and at Camberon's at Hampſtead; but we have heard nothing to relate remarkable, until by his induſtry he acquired money ſufficient to take a public-houſe, in a ſtreet, called the Gravel-Pits, near Berwick-Street, Soho; he was then twenty-four or twenty-five years of age.

About this period, he rendered himſelf the ſubject of general converſation, for ſome time, by undertaking, for a conſiderable wager, to leap off Weſtminſter-bridge into the river Thames.

Thames. This he engaged to do againſt any Newfoundland dog that ſhould be brought.

Notice having been given of the day when this extraordinary attempt was to be made, the public curioſity was much excited; of courſe, a prodigious concourſe of people aſſembled, the greateſt part of whom conceived, that they ſhould witneſs a man, wearied of life, under this pretence, put an end to his own exiſtence in the moſt public manner.

At the time appointed, SAM, with his friends made their appearance; having reached the top of the bridge, a circle was formed for the adventurer to undreſs, which being done, he got upon the balluſtrades of the centre arch, and with the moſt apparent indifference, threw himſelf into the river, and ſwam on ſhore, without receiving the leaſt injury.—An example, we doubt, if either of the aerial *potentates*, *Lunardi*, *Blanchard*, or *Zembeccari*, with all their *puffing*, would dare to follow.

This ſingular feat of activity, by every one thought impoſſible, without occaſioning immediate death, rendered him a popular character, and filled his houſe with cuſtomers. SAM not inſenſible to public approbation, now conſidered himſelf of ſome conſequence, though in the humble ſtation of a publican.

It

It is truly aſtoniſhing, that, in this metropolis, the moſt ridiculous undertaking, attended with the moſt apparent dangerous conſequences to the adventurer, thouſands will collect to witneſs, what they apprehend may prove, the immediate deſtruction of an individual. Some poſſeſs more ſenſibility of heart than others, which appeared on this occaſion; from what SAM has often told, when relating the circumſtance of this adventure.

" D—n my eyes," ſaid he, " when I was " ſtripping to *buff*, there was a decent woman " kept looking at me all the time; I'll be " d—'d if ſhe was not a modeſt woman for all " that, but ſhe would not ſtir, nor take her eye " off me, till I had pulled off my breeches, and " then ſhe fainted away."

Having eſtabliſhed his character as a man of reſolution and courage, he prudently conſidered *that it was not fit he ſhould be alone.* To guard againſt the violence of youthful paſſions, and ſecure himſelf from being enſnared by the artful allurements of proſtitution; in the prime of life, poſſeſſed of a ſound, healthy conſtitution, and every requiſite " *that ſpeaks home to the* " *female heart*;" he determined to enter into the ſtate of matrimony. An opportunity ſoon offered.

fered. His maid-ſervant, was cleanly, modeſt, and remarkably plain in her dreſs, which perfectly accorded with his taſte.

Sobriety and induſtry were charms much more captivating with SAM, than beauty, dreſs, family, or fortune—without ceremony, for ceremony he always deſpiſed, he offered her his hand and heart :—ſhe, with the utmoſt good-nature, inſtantly accepted the propoſal, and the matrimonial bond was ſolemnized in due and legal form. This union, in a ſhort time, produced a pledge of their mutual affection, his wife being delivered of a ſon, the preſent Mr. Samuel Houſe.

SAM, being now happy in himſelf and family, became a bird-fancier. In this ſpecies of amuſement he took much delight, and arrived at great perfection in a proper choice of birds, and was allowed, by connoiſſeurs in this article, to be a good judge. Some birds he diſpoſed of very advantageouſly, and it is ſaid by this traffic he cleared near £.100 *per* year.

He likewiſe obtained ſeveral prizes by ſhewing them at the annual club, which was held at his houſe ; however, the money, acquired by this means, he never applied to his own uſe, but

but diſtributed it, where he thought it was moſt wanted—among his acquaintance and ſervants. —Ye ſons of avarice, read this, and imitate ſo laudable an example.

As no human happineſs is complete, poor SAM diſcovered that the charms of the bottle attracted his wife's attention *in a peculiar manner*. Though he was a votary to the jolly god Bacchus, yet he would not ſuffer his *Cara ſpoſa* to be a worſhipper: in vain were all his remonſtrances, each day her attachment was increaſed to the *Idol*. At length he was under the neceſſity of *putting her away*, with an allowance of £. 20 *per Annum*. In this ſituation, ſhe became ſo enamoured with her favourite *deity*, that it ſoon overcame her, and put a period to her exiſtence.

Reader!—whether thou art male or female, pauſe a moment——reflect on the melancholy conſequences of drunkenneſs. Like a peſtilence, it blaſts every comfort of life;—changes beauty into uglineſs and deformity;—weakens the underſtanding, deſtroys the animal powers, and diſſolves every tie of ſocial and natural affection. It renders thoſe who before were objects of love and eſteem, that of hatred and diſguſt.

Ye lovely fair—endowed with the moſt delicate ſenſations;—formed by nature to ſweeten the comforts, and alleviate the ſorrows of life, who wiſh to preſerve the affection of your huſbands, and your own reputation in ſociety, avoid with the utmoſt caution this baneful and pernicious evil.

To return from this digreſſion.—SAM, to ſupply the loſs of his wife, took the woman who ſuckled his ſon, to be his houſekeeper. Being plain and induſtrious, theſe qualities recommended her to his notice; and, diſtinguiſhed by the name of *Nurſe*, ſhe lived with him on terms the moſt familiar until his death.

This intercourſe produced a fine girl, who is now at boarding-ſchool, about thirteen years of age, to whom, as alſo as her mother, SAM has left £. 20 *per Annum*, during their lives.

Having given a ſhort account of his family concerns, we now proceed to take a view of his political life. Though a man of no education, yet he poſſeſſed a good natural underſtanding, and frequently formed very juſt conceptions of men and things. Whether it proceeded from the cruelty of his maſter, as we before obſerved, or from its own injuſtice, he had a ſtrong averſion to every ſpecies of tyranny and oppreſſion. In

In the year 1763, he commenced politician, and took a very active part in ſupport of *Wilkes and Liberty*.

During this violent ſtruggle, SAM ſold his beer at three-pence a pot, in honour of Wilkes, the then champion of freedom; and at his own expence gave entertainments to his neighbours, and others, who he thought were friends to the ſame cauſe. It is ſaid his exertions in the election for Middleſex, on the ſide of the popular candidate, did not coſt him leſs than £. 500.

His generous and open conduct did not paſs unnoticed—refuſing to receive any recompence, a number of freeholders ordered a dinner at his houſe. At one of theſe meetings, Mr. Wilkes preſided. Though SAM was not a wit, yet he had a *quaint* manner of expreſſing himſelf, which would ſometimes create mirth; but this day he ſet the table in a roar.

Being called upon for a toaſt, he gave Mr. Wilkes, (and directing himſelf to that gentleman) added, "*I hope, Johnny, you'll always* "*look ſtraight.*"

At another time, which will ſerve as a counterpart to that we have already related; and, as a ſtriking inſtance of his political diſcernment;

previous to the diſſolution of the laſt Parliament, being in converſation with Mr. Byng, he obſerved, that he was ſure "Jack Wilkes *ſquinted* "*the wrong way.*" Mr. Byng, not ſuſpecting Mr. Wilkes to have deſerted the old cauſe, could not give credit to the aſſertion; but SAM inſiſted he was right; and at one of the following Hackney meetings took an opportunity of telling Mr. Wilkes—"*D—n me, Johnny, you* "*ſquint the wrong way,*" following him to his carriage, and ſhewing every mark of diſapprobation.

He rendered himſelf no leſs conſpicuous for his attachment to what he called *liberty*, than his perſonal oddities, particularly in his dreſs, which was not only ſingular, but laughably ridiculous. We cannot fix the time this uniformity took place; but many living characters remember him for thirty years in the dreſs we are about to deſcribe.

His perſon was not tall, but of the middling ſize, he was well made, ſtout, and active. His head was quite bald, without the appearance of hair, never having had much in his youth; without hat or wig, if he wore a hat, which was ſeldom, it had a very broad brim. It may literally be ſaid, he had not a coat to his back, for

he

he was not ſeen wearing a coat near thirty years —a black waiſtcoat, with ſleeves, was its ſubſtitute; he was always clean in his linen, which was of the beſt kind, but never buttoned his ſhirt at the collar; his breeches were of the ſame ſort and colour of the waiſtcoat, and open at the knees; ſilk ſtockings of the beſt ſort, either white or mottled, decorated his legs, which were deemed handſome by the ladies; but he frequently went without ſtockings; and either with or without, wore a neat pair of black ſlippers.

This was his uniform dreſs, upon all occaſions, both at home and abroad, without any regard to ſeaſons, company, ſituation, or rank of thoſe with whom he had occaſion to aſſociate.

When abroad the oddity of his appearance drew the attention of the populace.—Going one day into a part of the town where he was not known, only by report, the boys, who are the firſt to take notice of any thing remarkable in paſſengers, began to make him the object of their ſport; his patience was tired out in bearing their tricks and inſults. When calling a coach, he ordered the man to drive to his houſe, ſwearing in his uſual way, " that it was d—'d

" hard

" hard a man could not dreſs as he pleaſed for " the benefit of his health, without being treat- " ed like a madman."

Though auſtere in his manners, and unrefined in his diſcourſe, yet, he felt for the ſufferings of the unfortunate, and ſeemed to poſſeſs a conſiderable portion of the " milk of hu- " man kindneſs." Few perhaps in the ſtation of life he was in, contributed more towards alleviating the diſtreſſes of others. Though an enthuſiaſt in politics, yet political opinions were not the teſt of his benevolence; but he extended his liberality indiſcriminately to real objects of compaſſion.

He frequently walked in the morning to the Horſe Guards, where he was well-known, and inſtantly attended by a number of the ſoldiers, ſurrounding the old woman's breakfaſt-table; here he treated as many as choſe to partake of what they call " *Bow wow Pie*," a coarſe kind of paſtry and beef. She had always plenty of cuſtomers when SAM appeared, who paid for all. Obſerving the keenneſs of their appetite, he would, " D—n Government for obliging " the poor fellows (as he ſaid) to be *beaus*, " when their guts were fighting for the firſt " morſel that went down their throats."

An

An honeſt man was his delight. Many whom he believed of that deſcription have experienced his friendſhip with loans of £.20, £.50, or £.100. If repaid at the fixed time, which, without taking any other ſecurity than their word, he left to themſelves, they retained his good opinion; but if they failed in their engagement, they forfeited his favour. For theſe civilities he never took any intereſt, nor would he ſuffer the borrower to treat him on diſcharging the debt; but if he ſat down to drink with him, according to a cuſtom he invariably obſerved, in whatever company he ſat down with that came to his houſe, he paid an equal ſhare of the reckoning.

Notwithſtanding the private concerns of his family, and the attention which he paid to the political opinions of the day, he had nothing in his compoſition of philoſophical abſorption to deny himſelf of every enjoyment but thoſe of his favourite purſuits. He poſſeſſed in a high degree, thoſe delicate ſenſations incident to human nature, and tender feelings towards the fair ſex. When an opportunity offered, he was ever ready to do them a kindneſs in *their own way*. One of his amorous exploits he often told with much good humour. It cannot

bear

bear the appellation of *intrigue*, both the word and its meaning he was a perfect ſtranger to.

The ſtory, which he prefaced, in his uſual way, with ſeveral oaths, vouching its authenticity, is as follows :

He called one evening to pay a viſit to an old acquaintance, who, though not in affluent circumſtances, always received his friends with a hearty welcome. After the uſual compliments when *gentlemen* meet, they ſat down to refreſh themſelves with a cool tankard of porter, in company with the wife, and as a token of regard for each other, they all got *drunk*. It being late when SAM got up to take his leave, they perſwaded him to ſtay and take part of their bed, which he accepted, and after another pot or two of old Engliſh Burgundy, to bed they went. SAM declared he knew not how he got to bed, nor on which ſide he lay till the morning, but it was the *right ſide for buſineſs*. In the morning he was awaked by the wife bawling to her huſband for ſmall-beer, and complaining ſhe was dry. SAM ſeconded the motion, and ſaid *he was dry too*. His old companion thought it a good opportunity to give him a further proof of his friendſhip, by ſhewing his readineſs to oblige him, and went

to

to the cellar for the beer, leaving SAM and his wife together.

SAM at this time was a comely young fellow; and, to uſe his own expreſſion, "*could pay a bill at ſight.*" What paſſed between him and the woman *we cannot ſtate*; but on the huſband's return from the cellar, he obſerved to his wife, "Why, you are dry indeed, my dear, you pant like a hare!"—*The wife, having ſatisfied nature, through the indulgence of her huſband,* gave the pot to SAM, who ſaid—"Come, here's to our next merry meeting." The happy couple replied, *una voce*, Amen.

With regard to the political ſentiments of SAM HOUSE, he was uniform in ſupport of the rights of the people, in oppoſition to the influence of the Crown. At the Election for Weſtminſter in the year 1780, when the conteſt was violent between Lord Lincoln, ſupported by the Court, and Mr. Fox, ſupported by the People; he exerted every nerve in favour of the latter, and erected the Standard of Liberty at his own expence, for the Sons of Freedom to regale themſelves with beef, beer, &c. During the poll he headed a conſiderable number of Electors every day to the huſtings, who gave their ſuffrages for Mr. Fox.

When Lord Lincoln, with ſome of his friends, were canvaſſing, SAM was likewiſe employed in the ſame buſineſs for his friend Fox. The two parties happening to meet, a gentleman pointed him out to his Lordſhip, who immediately offered SAM his hand, aſking him of his health, &c. The Liberty Boy replied, "I'll ſhake hands with you; but I'll be d—'d "if I don't do you all the miſchief I can."

His activity and diſintereſted conduct during this election, recommended him to the notice and attention of Mr. Fox and his friends. It was reported, that during the Portland Adminiſtration, his Grace ſent for SAM HOUSE, and aſked him, if he could do any thing for him or his family; but SAM, with his characteriſtic honeſt bluntneſs, expreſſed in language not the moſt elegant, replied, he wanted nothing, he was as rich as any of them; and as for his ſon*, he muſt do as his father had done before him—(work for his living)— he would accept of no favour.

* A report ſtill prevails, that the Duke of Portland gave the ſon an appointment in the Cuſtoms of £.200 *per* year, but this is totally without foundation, he having worked at Calvert's brewhouſe, in Thames-ſtreet, as a cooper, until his father's death.

SAM

SAM recollecting the violent ſtretch of power in oppreſſing Mr. Wilkes, and that gentleman's manly exertions in defence of freedom; that, though by his oppoſition, he rendered himſelf obnoxious to the Court; yet, through firmneſs and perſeverance, overcame every obſtacle, and gave a mortal ſtab to that deſtructive influence in a glorious triumph.

Finding this baneful influence again raiſing its head, to the injury of our deareſt and moſt eſſential intereſts, induced him to lay aſide every perſonal conſideration, and riſk his fortune in ſupport of Mr. Fox, who, he admired for his firm and ſteady oppoſition to the American war, and other ruinous meaſures during Lord North's Adminiſtration.

To the uncommon abilities of Mr. Fox, and his friends, their fortitude and perſeverance, we are indebted for the annihilation of that Miniſtry, which, had it continued in the purſuit of thoſe meaſures, would have effectually ruined this Country. This was SAM's creed, and impreſſed his mind more and more with the integrity of Mr. Fox, and his ability to do his country an eſſential ſervice. And, notwithſtanding the various intrigues and changes that happened, SAM always thought, that if Mr. Fox would

make a proper uſe of his talents, he was the only man he knew that could reſcue his country from impending ruin.

When political reaſons made it neceſſary for Mr. Fox to unite with Lord North, SAM's confidence in Mr. Fox was ſhook to the centre. Mr. Fox's friends took much pains to reconcile him to the *Coalition*, but without effect; though they juſtified Mr. Fox's conduct, yet, they never could prevail on SAM to conſider Lord North a friend to his country. However, he continued his exertions in favour of Mr. Fox, whoſe ſeat was vacated on coming into office with Lord North; and there is little doubt, but the ſuperiority he gained over his opponents is, in a great meaſure, to be aſcribed to SAM's zeal and activity.

Dr. JEBB, wiſhing to introduce Mr. Churchill as a candidate for Weſtminſter, took great pains to make SAM a convert to his political ſentiments. He ſounded him on ſeveral ſtrings; but the muſic was harſh and diſſonant. The Doctor finding his rhetoric had no effect, conſigned him to the management of his LADY; who, with Mrs. Churchill, took an active part in the politics of that day, and frequently honoured SAM with an audience. Every man is acquainted with the irreſiſtable

irreſiſtable *influence of the ladies*, if not with *ſecret influence*. Mrs. JEBB made uſe of all her eloquence on this occaſion, and might have prevailed with any other man; but SAM continued inflexible.

In the end, ſhe ſaid, it was her opinion, that ſome worthy tradeſman in Weſtminſter ought to be elected inſtead of Mr. Fox; and added, "Mr. HOUSE, what do you think of Mr. "Churchill for your member?"—This was a thunderbolt to SAM, and, like an electric ſhock, ſtruck him ſpeechleſs; but ſoon recovering himſelf, he, with an *Engliſh* oath, made a *French* retreat, and never after honoured them with another viſit. The junto finding their ſcheme would not go down with SAM, whoſe intereſt in Weſtminſter would turn the ſcale againſt them, if they perſiſted in their project, determined that Lord Hood ſhould be put up in oppoſition to Mr. Fox.

Till now SAM and CHURCHILL were upon good terms, when an unlucky viſit, confirmed SAM in his ſuſpicion of Churchill's duplicity, and at once diſſolved their political friendſhip. A day or two after his viſit at Dr. JEBB's, SAM called upon CHURCHILL, with a, how-do-ye-do, and found him in conference with ſome charac-

ters he did not like. However, not regarding their reſentment, he aſked Churchill what ſort of company he kept? Churchill's *conſcience* was awake in an inſtant, and feeling the whole force of the alluſion, he replied with ſome warmth, "You're an ungrateful man;" which produced the following remark from SAM, "You're playing a double game Jackey, but I'll "be d—d if your phyſic ſhall operate in Weſt-"minſter."

It may not be improper to inſert a circumſtance, during the election, which fully evinces his diſintereſted motives. At a general meeting of the friends of Mr. Fox at the *Shakeſpeare Tavern, Covent-Garden*, the company (being ſo numerous) could not be accommodated in one room, but were obliged to be divided: Mr. Byng was called to the chair. Amongſt other toaſts, a gentleman propoſed to give SAM HOUSE. On which Mr. Byng ſaid, he was exceeding happy in the opportunity of expreſſing his hearty concurrence, in paying reſpect to a man, who had, on many occaſions diſtinguiſhed himſelf a warm friend to liberty.—He begged leave, he ſaid, to mention an inſtance of genuine and diſintereſted patriotiſm, which he could relate from his own knowledge, a circumſtance

cumſtance that would have done honour to the firſt character in this country. SAM obſerving, that the influence of the Court, would, if poſſible, prevent the electors of Weſtminſter from having the Man of their choice, without any ſolicitation opened his houſe. The friends of Mr. Fox ſeeing the profuſion of SAM, were afraid, that through his uncommon zeal in the cauſe of freedom, he would injure himſelf, and determined to make him a recompence; but knowing his greatneſs of ſoul and independent ſpirit, the difficulty was, to do it in ſuch a way, not to hurt his feelings. It was agreed, that a quantity of beer and ſpirits ſhould be ſent him, to ſupply what he had given away. Mr. Byng, and ſome other friends, waited upon SAM, and acquainted him with this reſolution; when, ſaid Mr. Byng, what do you think was his anſwer? (with the calmneſs of a philoſopher, and an expreſſive look of diſdain, conſidering it an inſult to offer him a recompence) "*You may be d——'d.*"

Notwithſtanding his intereſt in Weſtminſter, and the familiarity which his ſpirited conduct created with people of the firſt character, yet he never obtained a favour but the following.

A hackney coachman with whom he was acquainted,

quainted, requeſted SAM to procure him a figure for a coach—SAM promiſed to uſe his endeavours; and ſucceeding in his application, preſented the figure to the coachman, who, to expreſs his gratitude, offered him two guineas; but the preſent was refuſed with this reproof. "D—n bribery, when I ſerve a friend I want "no intereſt *."

We have already mentioned, that during the late convulſions in the Cabinet—When different deſcriptions of men found it neceſſary to join their intereſts, SAM was ready to conclude, that he had all along been deceived; that there was no real patriotiſm to be found amongſt thoſe who pretended to have the intereſt of the country at heart. Though Mr. Fox's conduct did not appear in the moſt favourable light to SAM, and was far from giving him ſatisfaction, yet, he ſtill believed him to be honeſt; and this perſuaſion, it is preſumed, ſtimulated him to exert himſelf in the manner he did at the late election.

It is worth remarking, that though SAM was unpoliſhed in his manners, yet he had juſt notions of propriety, and never attempted to in-

* The coach was diſtinguiſhed by a portrait of *Sam*, ſitting by a bowl of punch, &c.

ſinuate

ſinuate himſelf as connected with perſons of rank. During the election, a certain elevated female character, was no leſs induſtrious in favour of Mr. Fox than SAM HOUSE. Though his canvaſſing duty led him to various perambulations through different parts of Weſtminſter, he cautiouſly avoided going to that part of the city where he thought her Grace might be engaged upon the ſame buſineſs. The reaſon he aſſigned for this conduct, was, to prevent the malignant ſhafts of diſappointed malice being pointed at her Grace by the hireling ſcribblers of the day, who ſought occaſions of placing him in a nonſenſical paragraph with ſuch an amiable character. Yet, notwithſtanding this ſtudied caution, it cannot be thought ſurprizing, that during a forty days campaign, that they ſhould *once* happen to meet by mere accident.

SAM, though glorying in the friendly exertions of her Grace, yet his regard for propriety laid him under the neceſſity (as he called it) of acting in *maſquerade*, and at once ſacrificing his candour and ſincerity—play the complete hypocrite by roundly telling a lie, in order to ſave her Grace from cenſure, in a certain morning paper, at all times eminent for ſcandal, and ready to catch the moſt trifling occurrence, in

order to traduce the beſt character in the kingdom, for the *unpardonable* crime of befriending Mr. Fox.

It happened that her Grace of D——e, in company with two other ladies and one gentleman in the carriage, going down Wardour-ſtreet, came up with SAM in his uſual ſingularity of dreſs, ſurrounded by a few of his conſtant friends, a ſelect party of *mobility*. The noiſe and huzzaing of SAM, and his aſſiſting canvaſſers, occaſioning the carriage to ſtop, the gentleman who accompanied her Grace looked out to enquire the cauſe; knowing SAM, he immediately beckoned him to the coach, in order to exhibit him to the ladies. When he came to the ſide of the carriage, the gentleman informed him, that her Grace of D——e was one of the party. SAM, on his firſt looking into the coach, obſerved her Grace; yet, to avoid any obloquy that might be thrown on her character, he, without heſitation, replied to the gentleman, in his rough way, "d—n my eyes—none "of your riggs—blaſt ye, don't you think I "know the Ducheſs well enough to find out "that you tell a d—d lie. The Ducheſs, d—n "ye, is not here—God bleſs her Grace, I know "her well, and ſhe knows me too—Blaſt ye,

"none

" none of your riggs upon me."—With this ſalute, SAM took his leave, and joining his troops, pretended to inveigh againſt the gentleman for endeavouring to impoſe on him.

Thus, from a good principle, he told a palpable lie,—making himſelf appear in the inſtant both fool and knave, rather than ſubject her Grace of D——e to paragraphical animadverſions in party newſpapers, or tavern converſations.

His hoſpitality had the power of magnetiſm while the election laſted, and drew people from all quarters of the town. When any who caſually dropt in, were diſcovered to be electors who had not given their ſuffrages, he made inſtant application, requeſting them to go with him to vote for his friend Mr. Fox. His averſion to ceremony led him to be very free with ſtrangers as well as intimates. And when any of this *flying game* (as he termed it) apologized for their dreſs, he replied, " d—n your dreſs, come " along with me, if your friends to Fox," and, ordering a coach at his own expence, and accompanying them himſelf; in this manner he would take thirty or forty a day to vote for the Man of the People.

SAM was no reſpecter of perſons when he was offended.

Sometime previous to the late diſſolution of Parliament, at one of the monthly meetings at the Shakeſpeare, he attended with other Electors, and rendering himſelf conſpicuous by his oaths and ſingular appearance; the Duke of Rutland, who was preſent, intimated a deſire to ſpeak to him. SAM was accordingly called towards the table, where his Grace ſat, by Major Stanhope; who addreſſed him, with aſking, if he could not converſe without ſwearing? His reply was, "B—ſt your eyes, would you have "a man ſpeak in any other language but what "he is maſter of?" This anſwer was final, and prevented a conference between two great men, his *Grace* and *Sam Houſe*.

Proofs are not wanting to ſhew, that he was a man poſſeſſed of great courage. In addition to that of his jumping off the Bridge, the following will be ſufficient.

His canvaſſing buſineſs brought him to the Huſtings at Covent-Garden every day. At the beginning of the election, as he was paſſing Hood and Wray's *corner*, oppoſite the Hotel in King-ſtreet, in a coach, crammed with the fruit of his induſtry; on looking out at the window, he was

inſulted

inſulted by ſome of the ſailors, and more coming to their aſſiſtance, they began to feel themſelves bold; at length one of the banditti made a blow with a bludgeon at SAM's bald head, which, had he not fortunately eſcaped, muſt evidently have killed him. SAM incenſed at this extreme act of inhumanity, immediately exclaimed, "D—n your eyes, *you cowardly blackguards*, if "Sir Cecil's ſmall-beer has made you valiant, "let the beſt of you turn out, and I'll fight "him." This produced a ſhout of applauſe from many of the ſpectators; and SAM landed his corps in perfect ſafety at the huſtings.

SAM's favourite candidate having obtained a great majority at the final cloſe of the poll,—he conſidered this, as a complete victory over power, influence, and oppreſſion, which gave him great ſatisfaction. All his anxiety, labour, and fatigue, during this conteſt, in the congratulations of his friends on the happy iſſue of the buſineſs, melted away like ſnow before the ſun, and his cares were abſorbed in the flowing bowl. Though of a ſtrong conſtitution, yet as neither ſtrength, wiſdom, nor courage, can guard againſt accidents which may prove fatal, SAM got cold at the time of the election, which was followed by an inflammation in his bowels, attended with

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the moſt dangerous ſymptoms; till nature, unable to reſiſt the force of a complication of diſorders, gave way to the all-conquering power of death, on the 23d of April, 1785.

Amongſt a variety of whimſical peculiarities, it may not be inconſiſtent with the plan of the preſent biographical ſketch, to ſtate the following anecdotes.

Many years ago, SAM (in imitation, it is ſuppoſed of his old bottle companion and intimate acquaintance, Mr. Thomas, who lives at Hopwood's, near the King's-bench; who has, for a long time, made uſe of his coffin as a corner cupboard, which he keeps well ſtored with rum and brandy, to be drank at his death) ordered a coffin to be made of wicker; the men who were employed on this occaſion, wiſhing to make the job laſt till they got another, living at SAM's expence, were very backward in conſtructing the lid. SAM diſcovering this, his patience being quite exhauſted; one day when they were drinking as uſual, he exclaimed, "Get out of "my houſe, you reſurrection raſcals; I'll be "d—d if you have me yet;" and, dragging the coffin from under the bed, cut it in pieces, and threw it on the fire.

On the 8th of June, 1784, by the aſſiſtance of

of his friend, Mr. Keys*, the Meſſenger (who was a ſtrenuous ſupporter of Mr. Wilkes, dur-

* In the year 1734, Keys, then a boy, lived an apprentice at the Crown-tavern, Palace-yard, Weſtminſter. In Sir Robert Walpole's adminiſtration, party ſpirit was carried to a very great height: Whigs and Tories had ſeparate clubs in different parts of the town. At the above tavern, a club of *Conſtitutional Whigs* was held, the greateſt part of whom were Members of Parliament. To illuſtrate the ſtory, we muſt inform our readers, that three tailed wigs were then in faſhion, and, *twig his wig* became a cant word. One day, when Sir Robert was returning from the Houſe through Weſtminſter-hall to his carriage, and on that day particularly, was guarded by ſome of the Members with ſwords drawn. Keys, among others, who ſpit in the Miniſter's face, glowing with the flame of liberty, and ſpirit of oppoſition, mixed in the crowd to expreſs his deteſtation of the Miniſter. Juſt at the inſtant that Sir Robert was about to ſtep into his carriage, a voice was heard, "*Twig his Wig.*" It was no ſooner ſaid than done; Keys taking the hint, preſſed forward, and ſnatching the Miniſter's wig from his head, he threw it among the mob, to the diverſion of thouſands. Being well known, he was ſoon after taken up by a warrant, but his *Worſhip*, before whom he was taken, *leaning* to the ſide of oppoſition, conſidered it as a boyiſh trick, and diſcharged him.

ing

ing that gentleman's popularity, who then kept a tavern in Weſtminſter, and ruined his circumſtances through his honeſt, though miſtaken zeal, for the good of Old England) SAM revived the ancient club, called the *Conſtitutional Whigs*, which had laid dormant ſince the year 1734. The Grand Lodge was held at his houſe, and the whole together conſiſts of near ſeven hundred members, many of whom are Electors of Weſtminſter, and Freeholders of the county of Middleſex.

At one of theſe meetings, being appointed preſident for the night, he introduced a chairman in a livery great coat, as a worthy member; which gave offence to the company, who remonſtrated againſt it as a degradation of their dignity. SAM inſiſted, that he ſhould be admitted, and ſaid, "He's an honeſt fellow, tho' his "coat is of two colours; beſides, and be d—d "to ye, is it not ſufficient that I recommend "him?" But the company over-ruled the authoritative mandate of the preſident, which provoked him to ſuch a degree, that he ſnatched the cap of liberty from his head—threw it among the members, and immediately retired.

KEYS and SAM were inſeparable companions, united in the glorious cauſe of liberty, and a *bumper*;

a *bumper*; they took great pains to diſcover any who were falling off from their *political ſincerity*, as well as thoſe who they thought were treſpaſſing on the Conſtitution, by attending ſmuggled meetings for illegal purpoſes. This was playing a "double game," as they called it; and by one or the other of theſe two vigilant watchmen, when an opportunity offered, the offenders were ſure to be told of their apoſtacy in the moſt public manner, and in the plaineſt language.

So attached was he to Mr. Fox, that ſoon after the overthrow of the Portland Adminiſtration, on account of the Eaſt-India Bill, one afternoon, ſeveral ſtrangers went to his houſe for the purpoſe of obſerving in what manner it affected him. SAM perceiving what ſpirit they were of, he refuſed to let them have any more liquor; and, knowing the warmth of his own temper would lead him to treat them *roughly*, he ſent in *Nurſe*, who with all the patriotic fire of SAM, exclaimed, "You dirty *Pittites*, pay your reckoning, and "go about your buſineſs."

Though the following may appear trifling, yet as they are traits of a benevolent diſpoſition, we doubt not, but they will prove acceptable to thoſe, who are intereſted in the happineſs of mankind.

A few months before he was taken ill, he obſerved a poor child often wandering in the ſtreets, near his houſe, whoſe parents he found upon enquiry were extremely indolent, inſomuch that the child was neglected, and want ſtared him in the face. After ſome queſtions which were anſwered to his ſatisfaction, he took the boy under his protection, and finding him induſtrious, which was quite a virtue with SAM, he clothed and placed him apprentice to Mr. Webb, lockſmith, oppoſite his own houſe. The boy anſwered his expectations, and SAM declared himſelf happy to have lived to ſee it.

He took in two or three newſpapers for the amuſement of thoſe who frequented his houſe. Sometimes, when he went into the tap-room in the morning, and ſaw an indigent cuſtomer reading the paper, whom he thought had more need to mind his buſineſs; he would, d—n his eyes, and aſk him what had he to do with newſpapers, adding, "You had better go home and "work; politics wont fill your belly." This addreſs, however impertinent, was not taken ill from him, and generally followed by a preſent of part of SAM's dinner.

As a mark of SAM's attachment to Keys, whom he called "his tried friend," about a month

month before his death, he ſent for Major Labalier, and deſired Keys alſo to attend. When they waited upon him, SAM obſerved to Keys, that he ſhould be miſerable if he thought he would live to want, and as a token of his regard, deſired he would accept of £.20 a year out of his eſtate in Groſvenor-ſtreet. Keys thanked him for his good wiſhes; but glowing with the ſame independence of mind as his friend Sam Houſe, nobly refuſed it, telling him his friendſhip was diſintereſted; and therefore he would not accept of that, to which his family had a ſuperior claim.

During his illneſs, he was attended by Sir John Elliot and Dr. Hall; as alſo by Mr. Wyatt and Mr. Wright, ſurgeons.

A few hours before his death, Sir John Elliot informed Mr. Fox of his dangerous ſituation. Mr. Fox immediately went to ſee him, and ſat by his bed-ſide a conſiderable time. The converſation that took place cannot be faithfully reported; but it is natural to ſuppoſe, that SAM held faſt his political integrity, and requeſted Mr. Fox not to deſert the intereſt of his country. Mr. Fox's aſſurances we know not, but certain it is, this viſit gave him a temporary relief.

When he was gone, SAM expreſſed great pleaſure, in having ſeen his friend, the champion of Freedom, and ſaid, that Mr. Fox took him by the hand, treated him with great tenderneſs, and hoped he ſhould ſee him better when he called again. In half an hour, *poor* SAM changed, and entirely loſt his ſpeech; and about ſix hours after breathed his laſt, in the fifty-ninth year of his age.

Thus ended the life of a man, who, notwithſtanding his foibles, follies, and immoralities, poſſeſſed many public and private virtues.—As no character is without a blemiſh,—by viewing the faults of others,we ſhould thereby correct our own, and carefully avoid every ſpecies of vice which we diſcover in other men; at the ſame time not neglecting to imitate thoſe actions that are praiſe-worthy.

The news of his death no ſooner ſpread abroad, than people of all deſcriptions went to ſee his corpſe. At firſt they only admitted his particular friends; but the Monday following the crowd was ſo great, that neceſſity compelled them to give admiſſion to all who came, without diſtinction. It is ſaid upwards of five hundred perſons viewed the dead body.

The day and hour being fixed for the funeral ceremony

ceremony to take place, the ſtreets and lanes leading to Wardour-ſtreet, exhibited a motley aſſemblage of men, women, and children.

On Friday the 29th of April, at 6 o'clock in the evening, the proceſſion began as follows:

Two conductors with ſtaffs and ſaſhes,
Bearer with ſtate head and feathers;
Hearſe and four horſes, attended by ſix pages with caps and truncheons;
Coach and four horſes with chief mourners,
Coach and four horſes with united friends.

Conſtitutional Whigs, Grand Lodge.

Two ſtandard bearers.

The moſt *Noble Briton* with the enſigns of his office, *i. e.* the arms of the Prince of Wales, Duke of Portland, Duke of Devonſhire, Earl Fitzwilliam, and Earl of Derby.

Two vice-preſidents, each decorated with a ſtar and ribbon.

Treaſurer with a ſtar, carrying King William's key, with the impreſſion of William and Mary.

Gentleman Uſher, and the Conſervator, each with a ſtar, &c.

Secretary with a ſtar, and croſs pens in ſilver.

Staff officer, with the intrepid Fox, treading upon ſlavery.

Brothers,

Brothers, following two and two, in their blue and buff uniform.

The reſt of the members of the five United Lodges, two and two, in mourning.

The Tyler of the Lodge, with the chain of ſlavery *.

The proceſſion moved ſlowly down Princes-ſtreet, the Haymarket, round Charing-croſs, along the Strand, and up Bedford-ſtreet. When it arrived at Covent-garden; to add to the *ſolemnity of the ſcene*, the proceſſion went round the church to the north-gate. After the funeral ſervice was performed, the body was depoſited in the church-yard by the ſide of his wife, and a former favourite.

* To turn the whole into ridicule, a drunken watchman of St. Ann's, Soho, who was hired to perſonate the deceaſed, in a dreſs exactly ſimilar to SAM's when alive, joined the proceſſion, which occaſioned not a little controverſy among the populace, whether he was really SAM or not. His folly, however, was preſently puniſhed, for being guilty of ſome irregularities during divine ſervice; after the body was depoſited in the ground, the mob handled him very roughly, and forcing him into the hearſe, ordered the coachman to drive to the Undertaker's.

The

The moſt popular character, whoſe remains have been honoured with a public funeral, ſcarce ever collected a greater concourſe of people than were ſeen on this occaſion. The ſtreets and windows were crowded with ſpectators, and not leſs than five thouſand perſons were preſent near the place of interment.

He left to his ſon the following property:

An eſtate in Groſvenor-ſtreet, let at £. 100 *per annum*.

The houſe in Wardour-ſtreet, in which he died, ſince let at £. 50 *per annum*, and £. 280 good will for a leaſe during a certain term of years.

Plate, to the value of £. 150, and houſehold furniture, out of which the only legacies to be paid are £. 20 a year to NURSE, and £. 20 a year to her daughter.

The

The day after his funeral the following EPITAPH *appeared in the* Public Advertiſer.

SAM HOUSE is dead! and laid in duſt,
As ev'ry mortal fabric muſt;
No matter how well built and ſtout,
He's fall'n!—alas, his *leaſe* was out.
Ye bands in blue and buff array'd,
Lament your *Houſe* in rubbiſh laid;
That 'erſt ſo open and ſo free,
Stood up for Fox and Liberty.
A Houſe he was, well known to ſome,
Where wit and mirth were quite at home;
Rough-caſt indeed and unadorn'd
In native warmth ſecure, he ſcorn'd
Alike the *fretted* and the *gilt*,
And other fancies modern built.
Th' aſylum of unfriended merit,
He harbour'd more of Freedom's Spirit,
Than gorgeous palaces have bred,
Or domes that bear a roof of lead.
But ah! at laſt poor SAM is down,
And Fox has loſt a *Houſe* in town.
No party ſullen death eſpouſes,
The great demoliſher of *Houſes*;

And

And if an *aſpect North* he bore,
Perhaps would not have ſpar'd him more.
His *timbers* worn (with grief I tell it)
Spite of the carcaſe-maſon Elliot;
And ev'ry maſonry beſide,
Gave way at length to time and tide.
His *garret* once with gimcracks ſtor'd,
No more ſhall hearty glee afford;
That *garret* that diſplay'd before ye,
Enough to furniſh many a *ſtory*.
Then let the *Houſe* in quiet lie,
And paſs his *ruins* with a ſigh;
Nor Fox from Covent-Garden Huſting,
Diſturb the cell they've laid his duſt in.
Until that great concluding day,
That *builds* afreſh the ſons of clay;
He then refitted and *rejoic'd*,
His cheerful *front* once more ſhall hoiſt;
And ſhew, unclogg'd with rubbiſh foul,
The *lodging* of an honeſt ſoul.

N. B. Mr. HOUSE was member of almoſt every ſociety or club of Note; he was the firſt member of the *Conſtitutional Whigs* Grand Lodge, a member of the Grand Lodge of Druids, Loyal Britons, Royal Falconers, Couſens, Hibernians, &c. &c.

F I N I S.

BRITISH MUSEUM